

The ghosts and goblins are almost here ...

Learn how to carve a pumpkin, keep your kids safe and check out what's happening this Halloween

Step 1: The first step to carving a pumpkin is to cut out a wide circle around the stem, just like 1st Lt. Nicole Walters, 90th Space Wing, is demonstrating. After that is done, pull it out with your hands, not the carving tool. Brush or scrape off the seeds and goo. You can also roast the seeds for a salty treat.



Photos by Airman 1st Class Lauren Sixbey

Step 2: The next step is to take your hands or a spoon and scoop out the inside of the pumpkin. Note: this can be a bit messy, but it sure can be fun. Leave a one inch wall of the pumpkin left.



Step 3: Wash and dry the outside of the pumpkin. Be sure it is completely dry before drawing your design. If you're not the artistic type, get a stencil, like the ones we used to carve the pumpkins on the front page. Carefully draw on the pumpkin.



Step 4: Once you have your design drawn, begin by taking a small knife or a pumpkin carving tool and carve where you drew. It is best to use a back and forth motion.



Step 5: Once you have completed your carving, take a cloth and wipe off excess marker. Take a look at the inside of the pumpkin and toss any loose residue. You can place a candle inside and watch your pumpkin glow in the dark.

Treats X-rayed for safety

For parents who would like to employ an extra level of protection for their trick-or-treaters this Halloween, the 90th Communications Squadron Base Information Transfer Center is offering to X-ray all those treats. This service will be offered Sunday 7:30 to 9 p.m.; Monday 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m.; and Tuesday 1 to 4 p.m.. The BITC is located in Building 298, behind FTAC. For more information, call 773-3095.

Base Halloween activities

Looking for a safe and fun way to celebrate Halloween? You don't have to travel farther than the base gates. This year, Warren is offering a wide array of tricks and treats for boys and ghouls of all ages.

The medical group is hosting their 5th Annual Trick-or-Treat Hour and Haunted House today at 4 p.m. Bring all your little princesses, pirates, ghosts and goblins for free goodies and treats.

Wouldn't it be great to be rewarded for your creative costume? Try stopping at the Trail's End Club today, at 7 p.m. and you could win more than just chocolate for your Halloween candy basket. Cash prizes will

be given to the best-dressed couple, the scariest costume and the funniest costume. Is your creativity not worth your weight in candy corn? Stop by anyway for live music, snacks and games. This event is free for club members and \$3 for non-members.

On Sunday from 6 to 9 p.m., Fall Hall is hosting a free, fun and safe alternative to the usual trick-or-treating. Trick-or-Treat Off the Street offers fun for the entire family with a spooky haunted house, arts and crafts, ghost bowling and more. The Trail's End Club will provide a hot dog dinner for a small fee. In addition, the winning jack-o'-lanterns from the pumpkin carving contest will be displayed.

What do YOU think?

1st Lt. Darrick Lee
Public Affairs

The history of Halloween varies according to the teller, but it is most widely agreed upon that the holiday dates back over 2,000 years to the Celtic festival of Samhain, celebrated on the eve of the Celtic New Year Nov. 1. The Celts believed that the ghosts and spirits that had died throughout the previous year return to the earth on Oct. 31 to find new bodies to possess. If people had to go outside of the house on this day, they dressed up like ghosts and spirits in an attempt to hide themselves from the 'real' ghosts. If they stayed inside the house on that day, people left a bowl of sweet treats to appease the ghosts who might come to their door, in hopes that the ghosts would search elsewhere for bodies to possess.

Although Halloween is associated with ghosts, goblins and trickery, many recent critics say that the holiday has become too 'cute'. Many parents shy their children away from really scary Halloween decorations and costumes. Concerned for their safety on Halloween, many parents take their children trick-or-treating in the daylight several days before to spare their children from being scared by other trick-or-treaters. More organizations that acknowledge Halloween only allow non-offensive 'happy' decorations, rather than the traditional scary ones that might resemble the devil or other frightening depictions; and lately, more and more religious organizations are not observing the occasion at all.

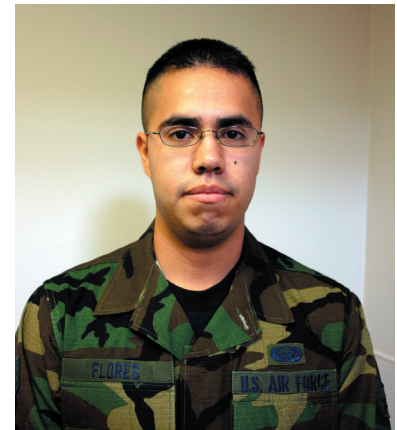
Businesses are cashing in on the season like never before, offering Halloween lights to rival those displayed during the holiday season, and advertising well in advance of the month of October.

What do you think? Has Halloween become a 'Disney-fied, Hallmark Holiday?'



"I think Halloween is following the trend of other holidays, spreading it out to celebrate as long a possible. It's not as fun as it used to be, either."

Airman 1st Class Richard Wood, 90 MOS



"It's like anything else ... it's as fun as you make it."

Senior Airman Alirio Flores, 90 MSS